

(Start Belt #5)

everybody starts from some relative position. Mine is zero and I need help to get up to where some of you are. I think that this is a reasonable request. I think it's basically sound. I think that it's flexible. I think that the Legislature will be remiss if they do not provide the tools needed to do the job. I've heard talk in terms of remuneration for members of this body. I knew the pay when it came down here. I accept that. You will never hear me gripe about it but I'll tell you one thing. I think many of us will be griping if we're not given the tools to do the job adequately and that's what we're asking for.

SPEAKER: Senator Syas.

SENATOR SYAS: Just briefly I wish to say that, for instance, in Senator Nore's speech, for instance, he--I thought it was--again we're downgrading, we're worried about the tax part of what this little minute thing that we might be doing would cost and I'll guarantee you the citizens would save more money if they gave--if we did do this thing. We wouldn't make so darn many errors. This is the thing that costs. You know, sometimes, it's wise to spend some money to save some money and this is one way we can do it. Now the same thing is happening in Congress today and that's why the legislative bodies again have been slipping all over the United States, national too is a fact. What does a Congressman say? I do not have sufficient staff. I do not have sufficient research and I am being overwhelmed. So since he doesn't have that, he gives powers to an executive because he cannot cope with--he doesn't have the research to cope with things that he should be doing on a legislative basis. Senator Proud one time a few years ago and I will always remember, he said some people say state government is dieing in the United States. He said I want to inform you that it is not dieing, it's dead. Well, that might be a little far fetched but I would say that state government is certainly slipping and has been for many, many years in these United States for the simple reason of the one things we're trying to cope with here. Now among salary and things of that nature, we cannot cope with modern day society unless we start doing something to--so we'll have adequate information so we can do the job for the people and let's quit downgrading ourselves. I am just sick of this thing.

SPEAKER: I would--I think Senator Syas correctly quoted me but I was quoting from a book I had read. Senator Stahmer.

SENATOR STAHMER: Mr. President, members of the body, I would like to speak in favor of the added research staff that the study committee has suggested. That there would be an advantage to the senate. I would like to point out that we're currently spending in a biennium approximately one billion, repeat, one billion dollars. One tenth of one percent of that is a million dollars. I honestly believe if we had better organization, better study, better research, we could save more than that one tenth of one percent or a million. I think we could save money up into the hundreds of million as a practical matter. More and more, the state government is the dog that Uncle Sam's tail is wagging with their mercy on all these programs. Many Senators here have the advantage of the monetary means to take off the time, to take care of their own expenses, to do what is necessary and on occasion even hire their own research staff. Other less wealthy members don't have the time, they don't have the money and they do need the help and I am absolutely convinced if I am convinced of nothing else after two years on the budget committee that what this state needs more than anything else is better, in-depth, organized, ongoing, forward-looking legislation, and I think the taxpayers of the state would be the chief beneficiaries. You cannot have your cake and eat it too. We have only 49 members in this body where the average state legislature in surrounding states has 150 members. They have three times as many people to form committees to do research.